**EDLD 5306 – Concept of Educational Technology**

**Course Reflections**

Concepts of Educational Technology course greatly exceeded my expectations. I felt that there were so many things that I could learn about new technology techniques. With technology moving at such a fast pace, sometimes you feel like you cannot move quickly enough. There are new techniques, new equipment, new software, new digital devices, and new helpful internet sites. In my job as technology teacher, technology liaison, and technology coordinator I knew that I had so many things to learn about. This course allowed me to look deeper into the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology and how we, as a district submit our technology plan. I knew that our district was required to make a long range technology plan, but I had not taken the opportunity to look at this plan closely. It also gave me the opportunity to compare the technology plans with the state and national standards. It gave me the opportunity to look at my own temperament and assess what kind of learning styles and leadership skills that I have. The Kiersey Temperament Sorter was a great way to assess and I was not really surprised to find that after taking the assessment I had the traits of a Guardian personality. I also had the opportunity to take a closer look at my technology skills through taking a survey. This gave us better insight into understanding what areas we could provide enrichment opportunities and what areas that we need further support and training. Technology is such a fast paced growing area that we never stop learning and exploring new opportunities for growth. This course definitely helped me reach the outcomes that I hoped to accomplish. I wanted to take a closer look at myself as an educator and technology coordinator and learn new techniques that could help me be better at my job. I feel like that the techniques that I learned definitely aligned with the goals that I had set for myself and for the course.

This course allowed me an opportunity to develop a blog and a wiki site which I can definitely utilize on our campus and in my own classroom. We also learned how to create a video using the Animoto video site. This enabled me to create the video and embed this video on my Wiki site. This was a great opportunity to practice some of the skills that I could utilize in our school. Blogs enable teachers and educators a discussion space so that they can communicate with other teachers and educators. These blogs provide supportive information on various subjects involved in the educational system. There is so much information available to teachers. A blog gives teachers a method to communicate in a useful manner. Blogs also offer a communication space that teachers can use with students whenever there is curriculum to display and create, writing, sharing ideas, and reflecting on work being carried on in the classroom. Students today are growing up in a digital world. These "digital natives" learn in new and different ways. Educational technology leaders must learn to “adopt and adapt” to meet the challenges these technology-savvy students bring to the classroom. The Wiki has gained a lot of attention in the education and learning communities because it is an ideal tool for increasing the amount of collaborative work done by students and teachers. Students can potentially use a wiki to collaborate on a group report, gather data or share the results of their research. Teachers and administrators might use a wiki to jointly write the structure and curriculum of a course and then the wiki can serve as part of each teacher’s course web site. Instead of students creating a complicated website, students can create a wiki which will provide a ready to use site with a simple use interface, the ability to easily add pages, and very simple navigation structure. These could definitely be great tools for us to use.

We all took a look at RSS feeds. These feeds can be used to publish frequently updated works. These can include entries such as blog entries, news headlines, and audio and video and can be stored in a standardized format. This type of web feed includes summarized concise text. Users can subscribe to a feed by entering into a reader such as Google Reader and then begin the subscription process. We had the opportunity to subscribe to some relative RSS feeds. I have not had the opportunity to look closely at these feeds yet, but I will have more of an opportunity later in the coursework. We did stay very busy in this course, but I definitely feel that I have some very useful tools to use on our campus and in the classroom that I can share with other educators. I look forward to sharing many of these ideas in in-service opportunities and on our campus with other teachers.

I feel like the course material was very easy to interpret and follow. The explanations on the courseware and with the help of other educators in our group made it easy to carry out the assignments. The Web conferences were helpful in explaining the details necessary to fulfill the course requirements. The course material was easy to save and I had the opportunity to visit site and read material that I might not have done had it not been for this course. The discussion board allowed us to communicate with other educators in our group to share thoughts and ideas about the course readings. Reading the leadership book, “The Tipping Point” gave me an opportunity to look at trends and how they evolve. We also had the chance to create the unique “Wordle” which I had not seen before. You are able to create wonderful word clouds from words, phrases, or even entire documents and this enables a designer to make graphic displays for memorization, higher level thinking, or for discussions. These tools can be used in so many different methods. I definitely plan on sharing this on my campus and with my students.

This course made me take a look at myself as a person. I assessed my personality, temperament, leadership skills, and technology skills. I already knew that I had many new techniques to learn, but I definitely think that I have grown as a technology person in the last few weeks by developing so many new skills. These skills can help me on my campus, in my own classroom, and when I am a presenter at our district in-service training. My attitude has also changed and I have found myself using a lot of the tools and skills that I acquired in this course and wanting to learn even more that can help me in the future. I am glad that I had the opportunity to take a closer look at myself. When you analyze yourself, I feel it helps you to be a better person, educator, and technology leader. This was a very intense five weeks, but I learned so many things about myself, my technology skills and weaknesses, and how I could be a better educator, trainer, and teacher. Sometimes it is very helpful to evaluate yourself, reflect, and think about the many methods that you can use to do your job in a better and more beneficial way.